

[Yeagdom]

[O'Jonnell?] [??] [?] N Y 38 [400?] 11/16 [38?] [?]

Yeagdom

You must have often read read often that the caste line / of the underworld are as rigid as those of Marblehead, Mass; that a self respecting confidence man, for example, can't must not be seen talking to a porch climber and that a safe cracker would jump off the Brooklyn Bridge before he would pick pockets. / . Henry did not invent that romance but he might have.

The pickpocket, or "dip" was supposed to be the untouchable of the crime world. Well, three of the big shots of the Underworld today, men whose names would read familiarly to you, were pickpockets some years back.

There is just one criminals class [?] criminals [?] which gave the others a [?] wide berth-the "yeag." You are accustomed to seeing it spelled "yegg", and so the dictionaries , unaware of its derivation . , give it. The words word is an abbreviation of the German " [?] Jager ", meaning hunter. T e The German j is pronounced like [?] t and the [?] Umlaut a has an ea sound, hence yeager or yeag.

The yeag was a tramp in all his ways [?] except that he scorned begging and petty stealing. He had a punk to whine for him , if need be. The punk was the boy [?] apprentice and each yeag had one. A boy served six [?] or seven years apprenticeship as earnestly as if bound out to an honest trade and when his "jocker", or master, pronounced him graduated the boy was a certified criminal and craftsman.

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The punk begged the town. Incidentally he kept the pot boiling in the jungle, but his begging was a cover to size up the lay. His sharp eyes took in at a glance whether a safe was a front-locker or a back-locker; and all other pertinent information.

The writer spent twenty odd years of his young, wild, Irish life among the yeags. During those memorable years [I?] he “mixed” and rambled with all the prominent members of the “Johnson family “, as the yeags called themselves. [I?] He know all the poets and songwriters and prize fighters and safe crackers and bank burglars of yeagdom intimately. [I have?] He has bellowed the songs of yeagdom in jungle camps and at conventions throughout the United States.

Moreover, [I?] he knew “Old Nevada Mike” and “Texas Dutch,” a German born burglar who organized yeagdom. Recently [I have?] he has contacted some of [my?] his old comrades to refresh [my?] his memory of yeag songs and poems. They reflect the bug-house, easy-come, easy-go life of the [the?] “Johnson family.” J. E. O'Jonnell [?] [?] [?]